DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 133 252 SO 009 659

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | Education and the Japan-America Tie in the Mid-'70s. Occasional Papers, No. 18. |
| INSTITUTION | Council on International Educational Exchange, New York, N.Y. |
| PUB DATE | 75 |
| NOTE | 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Council on International Educational Exchange (November 7, 1974) |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Council on International Educational Exchange, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, New York 10012 (free) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Cultural Differences; Cultural Factors; Economic Change; Economic Factors; *Economic Progress; Economics; Higher Education; Imagery; *International Relations; News Media; Political Science; Socioeconomic Influences; Student Exchange Programs; Television; World History; World Problems |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Japan |

ABSTRACT

Presented at a seminar on Resources for Educational Exchange with Japan, this paper emphasizes the closeness of the ties between Japan and the United States and the importance of the educational and cultural dimensions of the relationship. An historical treatment of the relationship between the two countries since 1872 points out the rapid change of imagery each country has for the other. The changes were mainly due to Japan's rapid economic and political growth. For example, the American impression of Japan changed three times in the 1960s. First, friendly Japan supplied products to the United States, then prosperous Japan economically threatened the United States when it experienced economic strain, and finally Japan was weakened when cut off from the U.S. market during the oil crisis. During the period of recent calm in this economically interdependent relationship, cooperation and joint efforts must be planned for dealing with future world problems. The imbalance of the educational and cultural dimensions of the relationship demands equalization. For instance, media and television in Japan are greatly concerned with what is happening in the United States, whereas the media in the United States pays little attention to Japan. Likewise, many Japanese students attend American schools and return to Japan knowledgeable about the United States, but few American students become so involved in Japan to learn the Japanese language. (ND)

Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original.

# CIE OCCASIONAL PAPERS No. 18

## on International Educational Exchange

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

# Education and the Japan-America Tie in the Mid'-70s

2

Council on International Educational Exchange 777 UN Plaza New York NY 10017

# Education and the Japan-America Tie in the Mid-'70s

Marius B. Jansen
Princeton University

The following paper was presented on November 7, 1974 by Marius Jansen, Professor of East Asian Studies, Princeton University, at the Seminar on Resources for Educational Exchange with Japan, the first area seminar to be convened by the Council on International Educational Exchange as part of its Annual Meeting. Professor Jansen's address, which followed two panel presentations on educational exchange with Japan, emphasized the closeness of the ties between Japan and the United States and the importance of the educational and cultural dimension of the relationship.

It was a little over a hundred years ago that an American, C.E. DeLong, responded to a toast at a reception for the Iwakura Mission ambassadors in San Francisco in 1872. He contrasted the conditions of two decades before, when Perry had first come to Japan, with those indicated by the arrival of a high-level embassy to study American institutions and education, and observed that "this mighty change, from our relations as they were to our relations as they are, is so sudden, so complete, so very wonderful as to be bewildering." In the century since then, luncheon speakers can safely have permitted themselves the same sort of comment every two decades, though they may not always have found the changes "wonderful." The 1890's would have found Japan still very much the favorite of the maritime powers, leading in industry, in enterprise and in institutions of representative government. By 1912 Japan was becoming a competitor of the United States with clear aspirations to leadership on the continent, and Akira Iriye's recent framework of "rival expansionisms" puts those changes into new and comprehensible terms. The 1930's saw this competition for influence become hostile. A steady change in language and imagery on both sides was bringing predictions of conflict; Japanese fears were heightened by awareness of American racial legislation, and American apprehension was sharpened by Japanese expansion in Manchuria.

1952 marked the end of a period of occupation and reconstruction, during which Japan had more than ever before become the ward of Washington; some of the attitudes of self-congratulation and condescension that marked Mr. DeLong's toast were in evidence again. Japan's isolation during those years, despite the American presence, was so great that the Tokyo University anthropologist Sabata has recently compared it to that of Tokugawa seclusion. On both sides, the American and the Japanese, there were suspicions that the ties forged in defeat between the two countries might soon be replaced by others with higher priority and importance.

Each of those shifts was a startling one, and at each point someone might have been expected to be bewildered. At most points the accepted wisdom, and often leading experts, failed to prepare for what actually took place. That was never more true than in the literature of the early '50s. It tended to take a gloomy view of the Japanese economic potential, and when the word "partnership" was used by government figures it failed to carry conviction. Yet in the two decades since then the Japanese-American relationship has become truly remarkable. There is a degree of interdependence in politics and economics that few foresaw, and a range of cultural and educational opportunity that is the more remarkable because of the cultural distance that has had to be bridged. But up to this point the cultural contact has still been relatively restricted and often superficial, and because it has, the images held in each country of the other have tended to change with lightning speed in response to political and economic crises.

We should be at a point at which some depth becomes possible, and the cumulative benefit of several decades' efforts in education and exchange begins to constitute real capital. In the next few minutes I would like to reflect on some dimensions of the Japan-America tie against this background.

The first point to note is that in the last half decade the change of imagery of which I spoke has been so rapid as to show that we still have a long distance to go. Instead of twenty-year intervals of relative stability, the American impression of Japan changed three times in a half decade. Japan came into the late '60s still a favorite example of economic growth, a benign and friendly source of transistors, calculators and Toyotas. Then rather suddenly some impressive American trade deficits, and the awareness of Japanese prosperity at a time of growing American economic strain, threatened to revive the image of the tricky competitor. Suddenly there was a new image of Japanese buying up racehorses, French paintings and real estate. Japanese prosperity seemed to imperil American well-being, and American newspaper writers could scarcely restrain their annoyance that the Japanese were behaving the way Americans had twenty years before. Then came Nixon "shocks," liberalization of the Japanese market and finally the oil crisis, and Japan began to look fragile and life-size again. The Japanese investor has been replaced by the Arab and the Iranian. For whatever reason, though, it must be

apparent to the most casual observer that the Arab seems less sinister to the newspaper columnist than his predecessor. Perhaps it is because his oil is more important to Detroit than are Toyotas and Datsuns.

For the moment, though, the Japanese-American relationship seems to have emerged into a less troubled state, perhaps because we are both preoccupied with more immediate problems of energy and inflation. Both political systems have been relieved by the apparent solution to the "China problem" that drew so much talk. The Japanese seem indeed to have been the chief beneficiaries of the "China shock" that freed them to do what needed to be done, and the discovery that the American alliance need not cut them off from continental neighbors has made a good deal of debate about that alliance rather pointless. Again, President Ford has put Japan first on his visiting list, and the gradual resolution of the ten-year fixation with Southeast Asia offers the chance to put first attentions on relationships that have suffered from a certain amount of neglect.

In another sense, however, we need badly to put this period of relative calm to good use. Some very basic problems lie ahead, and neither country can deal with them without the other's help. The postwar era — we can agree with former Prime Minister Sato -- has come to an end. That period was characterized by ready Japanese acceptance of the American lead, the reconstruction of Japan and confrontation with the Communist powers. During this period Japan enjoyed ready and relatively inexpensive access to raw materials, including American food and Near Eastern oil; both economies grew rapidly and neither seemed directly to threaten the other. Japan experienced stable political majorities. In both polities rhetoric and actuality seemed to mesh: American self-confidence and aspirations to world leadership and Japanese commitment to reconstruction and economic growth. Today United States foreign policies and Japanese internal politics seem at the point of receiving their first real test and need for reformulation since the 1950's.

Perhaps this is more evident in the case of Japan. It emerges into a world in which there are no model states any more; the shine is off all other systems, and Japan's new size and strength make it impossible or inappropriate to follow the lead as in the recent past. The Security Pact, long the cornerstone of national planning and central to psychological and economic security, gradually begins to seem obsolete; it is less important to support or even to attack it. The goals of economic growth, unquestioned for so long, are being reexamined in the wake of pollution and inflation; even if they find reaffirmation, will they be possible under the new circumstances of import and labor costs? And what of the signs of economic nationalism in the West and in Southeast Asia; will markets and resources continue to be available as they have been? The answers to these questions are not in sight, and the way they are framed will have a profound importance for the way the rest of the century will go on both sides of the Pacific.

So we are fortunate to have an interlude of relative quiet, if we use it to think about the cooperation that must come. We need to prepare for joint efforts in help to the underdeveloped and food-shortage areas, in developing technology and access for energy problems, in stabilizing the world currency system and in stabilizing the trade relationships between Japan, America and Western Europe.

The record of predictions for Japanese-American relations is not very encouraging. Even in the last two decades forecasting moved rapidly from pessimism to euphoria, and now, at least in some of our newspapers, it has returned to pessimism. But if one discounts the distortions that journalism encourages, it is also clear that some very important constants are involved. Whatever the interpretation of the Security Pact, it is surely true that the security and friendship of Japan are as essential to the United States as those of America are to Japan. The American withdrawal from Southeast Asia will only serve to emphasize the greater importance of Japan in such terms, and the lightly armed stance of Japan continues to be premised upon the assurances of an American alliance.

These facts take on new meaning as the complexity of economic interdependence grows. Japan and America have built up the largest overseas trade between two countries in world history. It totalled

$14 billion in 1972 and rose to $16 billion in 1973. Trade with the United States makes up about one-third of Japan's total list; Japan has become the United States' second largest market and the largest for agricultural products, in which Japan absorbed 17 percent of the United States' exports in 1973. Interpenetration of this scale inevitably brings frequent friction and a constant need for readjustment, especially since American agricultural products do not compete with Japanese products – except in the few areas where citrus growers have been able to crack the influence of farm lobbies in Japan – while Japanese manufactured goods compete with American products all along the line. But trade relationships of this scale bring even greater opportunities.

Japan begins to have meaning on a personal level of daily experience in a way that it could never have before. To the tide of Japanese students to this country has been added a movement of American students to Japan, and the flood of English words into postwar Japanese begins to find some echo – probably fortunately still faint – in terms from *shibui* to *hibachi*. Japanese companies long ago found it important to set up overseas training programs for their young executives, and at last our commercial and financial institutions are beginning to sense the utility of having their employees know some Japanese too. Every summer more students work their way to Japan. We are some distance from getting there, but in the long run a balance of education is no less important than a balance of trade.

If we examine the educational and cultural dimension of the Japanese-American tie, it becomes apparent that, although the imbalance is somewhat less horrendous than it used to be, it is still impressive and still startling. In Japan the United States continues to get first attention. English is the basic second language, there is an enormous infusion of English vocabulary into Japanese usage, and the media give America and its concerns and activities enormous coverage. Sometimes the effects of this can be startling. Not long ago a friend in Kochi commented to me about his astonishment at learning from American television programs (all dubbed, of course; Ben Casey, he went on to say, spoke a "fine, manly Japanese") how fine and strong the American family system was; the American father, he thought, was a particularly admirable figure.

Twenty years ago it often seemed that the preoccupation of the Japanese media with the United States – its power, its size, and its wealth – was obsessive and abnormal. That intensity has now declined, and the coverage is down to more manageable proportions. The rest of the world has come into much clearer focus for the Japanese public. During the same period there has also been a steady growth in direct, first-hand contact with the United States that is of very great importance. The Japanese horizon is much broader today, and Japan itself far more international. The flow of Japanese travelers abroad has increased as fast as the flow of Japanese products. In 1968, 82,000 Japanese came to the United States; in 1970 the figure was 203,000. In 1969 the number of Japanese who went abroad exceeded the number of foreigners who came to Japan for the first time. That year 710,000 Japanese traveled overseas, and that total has grown since then. The proportion of Japanese travelers that comes to the United States turns out to be the same as the proportion of Japanese products that come to the United States. Figures for American travelers to Japan would probably go the other way; they were most numerous in the postwar years, but the bulk of that flow was made up of men in uniform who had little choice. Genuine travel to Japan began to build up in the 1960's, and now comes to the same considerable dimension; for 1974, the figure was 246,000.

But when it comes to study of Japan and of the Japanese language the imbalance between the two societies becomes very clear. Japanese language is more widely studied in the United States than it was, to be sure, but the total enrollment on college and university campuses is still below five thousand, about one-half of that in Chinese and one-seventh of that for Russian. Of course the figures for Western Europe languages would dwarf these. Even courses about Japanese history and civilization and society are followed by less than one percent of American college students. There are only a few hundred specialists in Japanese studies, and many of these are inevitably concentrated at major universities. There is an enormous amount of effort required to increase the amount and quality of information about Japan in textbook materials, especially for lower and middle school education. Still, I think we have to agree that the situation is more

promising than it was two decades ago. The quality of much that is available is high, and the respect and appreciation for Japanese civilization it conveys is much less guarded, and better grounded, than it used to be. The number of works of Japanese literature available in translation, and the file of illustrative materials at hand, quite eclipse the weary examples of the past. This effort has to continue, and it needs to be supplemented by works of synthesis and application to the content of basic general education.

When we come to the American media and their coverage of Japan, the contrast with the Japanese attention to the United States is particularly marked. Nathan Glazer's recent survey of indices like *Reader's Guide, Cumulative Book Index* and *New York Times Index* concludes that Japan comes in for a fraction of one percent – one- to three-tenths of one percent, to be specific – of attention. (Admittedly this is meaningless without a comparative inch-measure. It seems to be about the same as the space given France, one-half that given England, and one-quarter that given Germany.) The nature of that coverage is more of a problem. Speaking quite impressionistically, I have the feeling that Japan makes it if the item is bizarre or exotic (suicide or spending habits in recent years), or if its problems of congestion and pollution provide some relief from American concerns with similar evils. Student riots and crowded subways are good copy, of course; so is the company work force lined up for calisthenics or the company song. Prime Minister Tanaka's grant of $10 million to American universities to encourage the study of Japan was buried on the inside pages, but the purchase of a racehorse by a private Japanese made page one of the *New York Times.* The coverage remains very uneven and partial. For close study of Japanese-American relations one has to follow the Japanese press, whose reporters in Washington run down stories that do not interest the American news services. The basic foreign policy opinion polls that trace American attitudes pay so little attention to Japan that the Japanese government has to commission its own polls in this country. Contrast that with the regular, incessant questionnaires taken by the Japanese press to see how its readers feel about the United States!

American television has begun to try also. TV news, of course, has to focus on what is filmable, and that seems to limit it to the sensational. But the efforts of Public Television to give wider currency to outstanding Japanese films this winter promise to provide a kind of coverage so far available only in selected American cities. Even so, there is remarkably little attention to Japanese as individuals; instead they are seen as part of groups, and characters in set roles. There is not much opportunity for anything comparable to my Kochi friend's discovery of the virtues of the much-abused American father.

But it is the educational setting that concerns us today, and I would like to devote the time that remains to the point that Japan and the United States have some things in common that are usually overlooked. Both countries have had a good deal of experience with students from abroad. On the American side, Japanese students began coming here in significant numbers in the last decades of the 19th century. Uchimura Kanzo's autobiographical account of his experience provides a textbook case in the importance of student travel for self-discovery. Uchimura came having known only American teachers and missionaries, and with a romantic and optimistic expectation of the country he was to see. Its rocks would ring with praise, its hills would be crowned with temples, and Hebraisms would be a common form of speech. Then he landed in San Francisco in 1884, in the middle of the agitation against Chinese immigration. Yes, he admitted ruefully, Hebraisms were indeed a common form of speech, but not quite in the way he had imagined them to be. But he went on from there to rediscover his own country and establish his identity, and to deepen his understanding of the values and religion he had come to seek. He returned to Japan to make a major contribution to modern Japanese spiritual and intellectual history. Uchimura was one of hundreds of Japanese to come to this country in those decades. A study in progress has the names of over 750 registered in colleges and universities for the period 1870 to 1900, and there must have been many times that number in minor schools and academies. These numbers, impressive as they were for the educational elite of that period, were in turn eclipsed by the Japanese student numbers that came after World War II. Last year Finance Minister Fukuda in conversation with several of us credited Japan's achievements in the postwar world to the experiences gained by this student generation, which has now returned to positions of executive importance.

Something that has had much less attention is the experience Japan has had with students from abroad. As modern Japan became a going concern in the 1890's, Tokyo began to attract students from China. It began with a trickle after the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The numbers grew after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and peaked around the time of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905-06, when the total is estimated to have run between 8,000 and 14,000. Numbers leveled off again toward the end of the decade, only to grow in the second decade of the century. By then Boxer remission and other programs were also swelling Chinese student numbers in the West.

The number that congregated in Tokyo between 1900 and 1911 was so great, and the movement so unprecedented, that we can call it the first large-scale student movement of our times. It was an experience that was pivotal for a generation. Like Uchimura, the Chinese students found that their optimistic expectations about Japan proved mistaken. Partly because of their numbers and because of Japanese unpreparedness to deal with them, they tended to stick to themselves. Too often they were objects of condescension and even derision. The opportunity for two-way understanding was great, but it was also bungled. The students were unprepared, and so were the schools. The experience of the students contributed more often to their own sense of nationalism and national frustration than it did to two-way understanding. The Chinese revolution of 1911 was, in good measure, organized in this setting.

Of course there were exceptions: Chinese students who developed a genuine interest in their host country and Japanese educators whose assistance was long remembered by their students. But for the most part the experience and its opportunities serve to throw light on the peculiar ambivalence of emotions and attitudes that characterized early 20th-century Chinese-Japanese relations rather than to provide a workable model for us to copy.

There are points of warning here to note. Student contact, even large-scale student contact, does not by any means produce international understanding unless it is carefully thought out and prepared, and unless there is an institutional network ready to receive the students. It is a reminder for all of us of the need for preparation, for articulation with the other educational processes, and above all for information about what is available and what can be expected.

I think this is particularly important today as so many American campuses add study abroad to the wares they advertise, and as so many try to attract paying students from abroad to bolster falling enrollments. Especially in the case of study in Japan, it is all too easy to isolate the students. The only remedy for this is planning that prepares the students and sees to it that they receive at least some involvement with the Japanese language.

The problems here are very real. Japan remains the only world power without a world language; as Professor Sabata put it recently, it is the only major country whose language is spoken only within its own borders. Until recently that meant there were only limited advantages to struggling with it. But as Japanese involvement in world affairs and the world economy increases, the rewards for the study of Japanese increase proportionately. More to the point, some knowledge of Japanese is surely a requirement of success in Japan. Nowhere else, to my knowledge, is the proportion of host appreciation to visitor achievement so high as in Japan.

So it is my hope that in this period of relative relaxation in Japanese-American affairs, and of growing interdependence and mutual involvement, we can work at some of these concerns quietly and intensively. I am delighted that the Conference this year decided to focus on Japan, and hope that the result of your work will be carefully thought out programs of exchange and study in that country.